

Media Ownership Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
Docket 06-121

Dear FCC,

This letter is in regards to the repeal of the Dual Network Ban. The FCC rule for the dual ban states:

“The current rule permits common ownership of multiple broadcast networks but prohibits a merger between or among the “top four” networks, *i.e.*, ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC. The restraint was not an issue in *Prometheus*. The *Further Notice* calls for comment on whether the restriction should be retained.” ([Fcc.gov/ownership/rules.html](http://fcc.gov/ownership/rules.html))

The main reason that I feel this ban should not be lifted is because without it in place the other rules outlined by the FCC would conflict. For instance if the ban was not in place the merge of two major broadcasting companies would exceed the ownership limits and also hold more than the limit of percentage of viewers allowed. The ownership caps and viewing limits are all outlined on the FCC’s website, in regards to how many stations and viewer percentages that a major network can own. This is also an issue of a monopoly, because if two major networks merged then they would dominate the market and make it hard or even impossible for smaller networks to begin or survive.

As a viewer I feel that the ban is important because I enjoy local and small business and would like to see them around. I feel that if the ban was lifted that the way T.V. and radio would work would not be as personal as the smaller networks that exist now. The smaller business that I am referring to is that of the local news and radio stations that are owned by the major networks, but are not major news stations or major markets. I believe strongly in the small business owners and do like to see more businesses that compete, and the lift of this ban would make it harder for small business owners to survive. I also can see potential problems with major networks limiting the material that is broadcasted on smaller stations. For instance local network owners may chose to broadcast information of video that FOX or ABC would not allow because of the nature of the material, or vise versa. With major networks controlling multiple broadcasting stations they would limit the decision making process because one person, an CEO, or a few people, the President and Vice President, would be making the majority of the decisions, whereas if there were more smaller broadcasting stations they would have more people, such as the station managers and news anchors, making decisions about what can be broadcast or not so that not all view was the same throughout the nation.

Based on information regarding major network polarization, a recent study showed that:

“Political polarization is increasingly reflected in the public's news viewing habits. Since 2000, the Fox News Channel's gains have been greatest among political conservatives and Republicans. More than half of regular Fox viewers describe themselves as politically conservative (52%), up from 40% four years ago.” (As stated in a survey from people-press.com entitled News Audiences Increasingly Politicized.)

This shows that FOX already has a majority of viewers that they are limiting the information that is released to the public because of bias. If another major network was to merge with FOX then the news delivered by these networks would not only dominate a major majority of the public, but would also skew the view of how the public views the world and or media. The idea of a non-bias news source is ideal, but not realistic, and by two major networks merging then they would only push the polarization further than it already is.

Another major reason also stated in the same article is that: “CNN's once dominant credibility ratings have slumped in recent years, mostly among Republicans and independents.” (News Audiences Increasingly Politicized) This shows that viewing rates for other major news sources are already suffering and if there were to be a merger it would only push this bias news source into further polarization of bias news media.

These are major reasons that the Dual Network Ban should remain in place, and keep multiple news sources in place to ensure that media strives to be as non-bias as possible. Although the idea of a non-bias news source is not realistic, the idea that polarization can occur is very possible and if the ban was lifted then that would make the polarization more likely to occur.

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